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ABSTRACT

The Initiation to Teaching project, designed by the Alberta (Canada) Ministry of Education, provides continued professional training to graduates of schools of education. The project's internship environment facilitates the transition from student to professional teacher. The project allows for: (1) refinement of teaching skills; (2) development of professional relationships; (3) assessment of the intern's suitablity for placement; (4) assessment of the effectiveness of the internship; and (5) further development of the professional skills of supervising teachers. Conditions, principles, guidelines, and procedures of the project are discussed. A brochure included with the report supplies information on the project's purpose and funding, eligibility requirements, and sources of information. (CB)

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THE INITIATION TO TEACHING PROJECT

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THE INITIATION TO TEACHING PROJECT

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Office of the Minister

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In the Alberta Legislature on April 22, 1985, I had the pleasure of announcing the Initiation to Teaching Project. This new initiative by the Government of Alberta will provide an excellent opportunity for beginning teachers who might otherwise not find full-time teaching positions. They will be able to participate in an innovative extension of their university training under the guidance of excellent, experienced classroom teachers. At the same time, the benefits of this kind of transitional year from student to full time practicing teacher can be explored and assessed.

The prospects for this project are exciting. We all recognize that the key to an excellent education lies in excellent teachers. Alberta has been a leader in the preparation of teachers and as a result, the quality of the vast majority of our teachers is outstanding. This project reflects our commitment to continuing leadership in the preparation of beginning teachers. In the end the children will benefit most from this commitment and from our collective efforts to provide them with the best possible education.

I appreciate the cooperation and support of students, beginning teachers, universities, school boards, and practising teachers and wish every success to the participants in this exciting new initiative.

Sincerely,

David King
Minister of Education

THE INITIATION TO TEACHING PROJECT

A. Purpose

The major purpose of the Initiation to Teaching Project is to provide for the continued professional training of graduates of faculties of Education in an internship environment to facilitate the transition from student to professional teacher. As well, the project will provide employment for prospective teachers who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed.

The process provides for:

1. Refinement of teaching skills;
2. Development of professional relationships;
3. Assessment of the intern's suitability for placement;
4. Assessment of the effectiveness of the internship as a means to improve teaching competency; and
5. Further development of the professional skills of supervising teachers.

All of the above will occur in a structured and supportive environment.

B. Conditions

The project will operate within a defined set of conditions:

1. The project will operate for two years until June 30, 1987;
2. The project will operate as a pilot to assess the usefulness of the internship environment in improving the effectiveness of teachers graduates;
3. The project is not universal but can accommodate up to 900 candidates each year of operation;
4. The project eligibility criteria limit participation to individuals who have been Alberta residents for the last three years, legally entitled to work in Canada, who
   a. have graduated from an approved teacher education program during the last 18 months, and
   b. have been 4 months unemployed or are employed in positions significantly below or unrelated to their academic and/or experiential qualifications (underemployed) or graduated less than 4 months earlier;
   c. have had no previous employment as a full-time teacher and
   d. possess or be eligible and have applied for an Alberta Interim Professional Certificate.
5. Alberta residents who have graduated from a post-secondary institution outside of the province but returned to Alberta will be eligible providing that conditions in 4. above have been met;
6. The maximum period of time of the intern's participation is 10 teaching months;
7. Alberta Education will provide a grant of up to $5,460 (70% of the Alberta Manpower grant which provides a maximum of $7,800 per intern). Employers must contribute 30% of the Alberta Manpower grant to a maximum of $2,340 per intern;
8. The grant monies from Alberta Eduation and Alberta Manpower plus the contribution of the school board will make up the total value of the benefit package of the intern. All deductions required by law and for optional benefits programs are made from this maximum of $15,600 per intern.
9. Up to 75% of related instructional costs such as tuition and textbooks may be eligible for reimbursement to a maximum of $1,000 per intern per contract. This includes a reimbursement of up to $30 per hour for the cost of an external instructor.
10. The project serves both education and manpower objectives. Consequently, all terms and conditions of the Initiation to Teaching Project are consistent with those of the Alberta Youth Employment and Training Program.

11. The program may be monitored and audited by staff of the Auditor General and Alberta Manpower or Alberta Education.
12. Should overpayment occur, the amount of overpayment shall be repaid to the Provincial Treasurer as soon as the overpayment becomes known.

C. Principles

1. Participants in the Initiation to Teaching Project are employed on a temporary basis as interns, in transition from student to professional teacher.
2. The intern will be an active member of the ATA with the exception of interns employed in private schools.
3. Participation in the project is voluntary on the part of the intern, school staff, school jurisdictions, Category I and II private schools and private ECS operators.
4. Interns will not be included in existing collective agreements or bargained for collectively for the duration of this project. Each intern will enter into a contract of employment with his/her employer the terms and conditions of which are those outlined in this document.
5. The placement of the intern shall not result in the displacement of full, part-time or substitute staff.
6. The placement of interns and the program designed for each is a local responsibility; however, the program should contribute to the professional growth and development of the interns and should include the following characteristics:
   a. guidance and supervision by certified teachers, selected by the principal subject to approval by the superintendent;
   b. a planned program for the assumption of progressively greater responsibilities in the classroom;
   c. a full range of teaching experiences relative to the interests and abilities of individual interns;
   d. opportunities for participation in professional activities outside the classroom;
   e. clear identification of the expectations regarding the performance of the intern;
   f. provision of opportunities for the evaluation of the performance of the intern, consultation and remediation as required during the period of participation.
7. The project will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis both locally and provincially.

D. Guidelines

1. Interns may be employed by the boards of school jurisdicitons, Category I and Category II private schools and private ECS operators.
2. The interns must be regarded as employees of the boards of school jurisdictions, private schools or private ECS operators for a term definite and appear on the employer's payroll.
3. Boards of the school jurisdictions, private schools or private ECS operators must provide interns with the opportunity to participate in the following employee benefits programs where they are provided:
   - Alberta Health Care
   - Dental Plans
   - Group Insurance (including extended benefits)
   - Teachers' Retirement Fund
   - Pension Plans
   - Medical Plans
4. Boards of school jurisdictions, private schools and private ECS operators will extend to interns the same leave provisions as available to teachers covering sickness, critical illness and bereavement.

5. The board of the school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator will make deductions from the wages of the intern as required by law and to cover optional benefits programs as outlined in 3. above. The deductions will include both employee and employer contributions where applicable.
6. Experience as an intern does not contribute to the teaching experience required for permanent certification or salary purposes.
7. During the course of the project, both the board and the intern may terminate the relationship by mutual consent or 30 days notice.
8. The intern may not be employed as a substitute teacher.
9. The assignment of the intern must be to a school (or schools) under the supervision of a principal or head teacher and a team of associates rather than an individual teacher.
10. The program plan for the intern is expected to:
    a. provide varied experience in all aspects of teaching, including
        - planning of instruction
        - diagnosis of student needs and learning requirements
        - evaluation of student progress and achievement
        - development and/or identification of instructional materials
        - classroom management
        - communicating with parents
        - design and implementation of extra-curricular activities
        - participation in professional activities and inservice
    b. provide progressively greater responsibilities for teaching over the period of the project;
    c. provide interns the opportunity to work with teachers of outstanding professional qualifications in terms of training and performance;
    d. encourage the intern to work with a number of teaching staff;
    e. build on the individual strengths of the intern.
11. The responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of both the intern and the local project rests with the school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator within the guidelines established by Alberta Education.
12. Plans developed by the school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator for the evaluation of interns should be modelled on their policies in place for the evaluation of teachers and must include an appeals procedure.
13. Alberta Education will be responsible for the overall co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Initiation to Teaching Project.

E. Procedures

1. In order to participate in the project the board of a school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator must develop or have in place a plan with respect to the employment of interns.
2. The school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator will notify Alberta Education of its intention to participate in the project by making application.
3. Alberta Education will review the applicaton and, if approved, forward the application to Alberta Manpower.
4. Project approval and subsequent funding will be based on all eligibility criteria being met.
5. If approved by Alberta Manpower, Alberta Education will notify the board of the school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator of the approval.
6. Upon contracting with the intern, the board will notify Alberta Education to initiate the grants by both Alberta Education and Alberta Manpower.

7. The school board will be responsible for the project design and evaluation, recruitment and selection of interns for the project, organization of the project and supervision, placement and monitoring of the interns and their evaluation within the guidelines established by Alberta Education.
8. Written documentation of the progress of the intern shall be maintained by the school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator.
9. Alberta Education periodically will request information on the progress of the program from interns and from the school jurisdiction, private school or private ECS operator as a part of the monitoring and evaluation process.
10. At the conclusion of the program, the superintendent, private school head or designate will provide to the interns a written assessment, including a summary statement dealing with their individual professional qualities.
11. The local Regional Office of Education will monitor the implementation of the program. Alberta Education will monitor and evaluate the Initiation to Teaching Project and make such adjustments as are required at the end of the first year of implementation.
12. The project will be co-ordinated by a steering committee representing various stakeholder groups, the term of reference of which will include:
    a. monitoring and reporting on the progress of implementation;
    b. consultation with the participants on the design and conduct of the evaluation (this may necessitate developing a mechanism for developing ongoing guidelines and evaluative criteria);
    c. liaison between the school jurisdictions, private schools or private ECS operators and the membership of the steering committee;
    d. assessment of the internal and external impact of the program and implications for the stakeholder groups in teacher education programs;
    e. follow-up of interns who have obtained employment as teachers and those who have not;
    f. ongoing monitoring of the project;
    g. final evaluative statement of the project that includes recommendations for future action with respect to the project;
    h. preparation of a report on the summary evaluation of the project and recommendations.

ATTACHMENT A

Stakeholder Roles — The Initiation to Teaching Project

A. Alberta Education

- Provision of a provincial grant to the project.
- Implementation, co-ordination and administration of the provincial program.
- Establishment of the project steering committee.
- Participation on the project steering committee.
- Preparation of an information package.
- Advertising of the project to school jurisdictions, private schools, private ECS operators and prospective interns.
- Participation in invitation zone meetings on the project.
- Review and approval of applications.
- Advice to the boards of school jurisdictions, private schools and private ECS operators.
- Development of an evaluation design for the project.
- Monitoring, evaluation and adjustment of the project as required.

B. Advanced Education

- Participation on the project steering committee.
- Provision of information to post-secondary institutions.

C. Alberta Manpower

- Participation on the project steering committee.
- Provision of grants to a maximum of $7,800 for wages for intern candidates payable to school boards.
- Reviewing, approving, monitoring and auditing grant applications for Manpower funds.
- Provision of a grant of up to 75% of instructional costs to a maximum of $1,000 per intern.

D. Faculties of Education

- Participation on the steering committee including student representation.
- Information sessions for prospective interns.
- Advice to school boards in planning the project as requested.
- In-service to co-operating staff in the project.
- Expert advice in the design and implementation of the evaluation of the project.
- Liaison between the participating schools, school jurisdictions or private ECS operators and the faculties of Education.

E. Alberta School Trustees' Association

- Participation on the steering committee.
- Organization of information meetings in the zones for participating school boards, superintendents, private school heads and private ECS operators.
- Provision of information on project progress to participating boards on an ongoing basis.

F. Conference of Alberta School Superintendents

- Participation on the steering committee.
- Participation in zone information meetings with the ASTA.
- Provision of information on project progress on an ongoing basis to members of CASS.
- Assist in the development and delivery of inservice to participating professional staff at the local level.

G. Alberta Teachers' Association

- Participation on the steering committee.
- Participation in inservice and planning activites at the local level.
- Communication of the details of the project and its progress to their members.
- Participate in zone information meetings with the ASTA.
- Extend to interns active membership at a reduced fee (1% of salary).

H. Local School Board

- Establishment of plans with respect to the employment of interns.
- Development of the project plan and implementation process.
- Selection of interns and co-operating teachers.
- Provision of inservice for co-operating teachers and interns.
- Establishment of an ongoing monitoring and evaluation process.

I. Private School Boards and Private ECS Operators

- Same as for school boards.

J. Steering Committee

- Monitoring and reporting on the progress of implementation.
- Consultation with participants in the design and conduct of the evaluation of the project.
- Liaison with the participating school jurisdictions, private schools and private ECS operators.
- Assessment of the internal and external impact of the program and the implications for the stakeholder groups in teacher education programs.
- Design and implementation of a follow-up of interns.
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project.
- Provisions of recommendations regarding adjustments as required after the first year of operation of the project.
- Preparation of a report on the summary evaluation of the project and recommendations.

THE INITIATION TO TEACHING PROJECT

Education Minister David King established the Initiation to Teaching Project on April 21, 1985.

It will enable recent graduates of Alberta's approved teacher preparation programs to be employed by public and separate school boards, private schools or private ECS operators. Participants will not be employed as teachers: they will work under the guidance and supervision of teachers with outstanding professional qualifications. The experience will enable beginning teachers to refine their teaching skills and to improve their competencies. Up to 900 interns can be employed each year for the two-year period.

Funding for this project will be provided by Alberta Education and the Alberta Youth Employment and Training Program announced in October, 1984 by Manpower Minister, Ernie Isley. Alberta Education will provide a grant to school jurisdictions of up to $5,460 per participant. Alberta Manpower will provide a grant of up to $7,800 per participant. With local school boards providing $2,340, the beginning teacher employed in this program will receive a salary and benefits package of up to $15,600 for the school year.

The Minister of Education has received positive response to this new project from the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Faculties of Education, and the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents.

You are eligible for the Initiation to Teaching Project if you:

- are a resident of Alberta for the past 3 years;
- graduated from an Alberta approved teacher education program during the past 18 months;
- are 4 months unemployed/or be underemployed;
- have no previous employment as a full time teacher;
- possess or have applied for an Alberta Interim Professional Teaching Certificate.

Graduated students interested in being involved in this new Initiation to Teaching Project should write to the following address for complete information:

Dr. Larry Rappel
Teacher Certification and Develoment
Alberta Education
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 0L2

Telephone: 422-1719 or 422-1721
24-hour information

Complete information packages on the Initiation to Teaching Project are also being forwarded to all Alberta school boards. Graduates from Education Faculties should apply directly to school boards. The project is limited to 900 students each year and those interested are requested to make contact as soon as possible.

The Initiation to Teaching Project is not an internship program in the full sense, but it provides an opportunity to assess whether or not the teacher internship concept can result in significant improvements in the preparation of first-year teachers. The project will be evaluated over the two-year period to provide a research basis upon which to determine the usefulness of internship in the training of teachers.

This project provides us with an excellent opportunity to combine a temporary employment program with the concept of teacher internship. This concept may be a means to improving the teaching competencies of first year teachers. The Initiation to Teaching Project will allow for the continued professional training for beginning teachers in an internship environment and will facilitate their transition from student to professional teacher.